

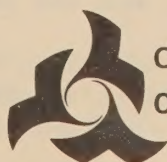
KEEPING THE GOOD LIFE:

CAN WE PROTECT OUR LIFESTYLE
IN THE FACE OF
GROWTH AND CHANGE?



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OVERVIEW SUMMARY

Centers Implementation Program

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

OUR GOOD LIFE

Los Angeles has long been known for its enviable lifestyle characterized by:

1. Affordable low density housing (few other large cities have as many of its citizens living in single-family and other low density housing as Los Angeles does).
2. High work force mobility (Los Angeles residents have relatively ready access to any one of the several million jobs in the city, even if they live miles from it. This mobility maximizes Los Angeles residents economic opportunities).
3. Numerous recreational areas (Los Angeles residents have ready access to an unequaled diversity of recreational opportunities. Although there are often large cities with good recreational resources, none has more variety than Los Angeles.)

These three characteristics of Los Angeles' lifestyle have drawn millions of people here; they have made this city grow.

The Los Angeles lifestyle continues to attract people to the city. However, even the more limited growth we are now experiencing threatens to destroy the very features that we find so enjoyable about Los Angeles.

LOS ANGELES' PROBLEM

Current trends, all of them well underway, will slowly but surely:

1. Turn our low density neighborhoods into areas of denser and denser housing.
2. Make commuter traffic so congested that residents may not be able to take advantage of new job opportunities in another part of town (because easy freeway commuting more than a short distance might be next to impossible).
3. Make getting to some recreation activities very difficult. For all intents and purposes, people's recreational opportunities will become greatly diminished.
4. Choke us in our own smog if we do not solve the pollution problem.

THE BAD NEWS

Recent studies by the University of Southern California and the Southern California Association of Governments show that by the year 2000, our people could be facing:

- rush hour freeway speeds as low as 5 mph,
- serious health problems for young and old alike caused by continued dangerous air pollution, and
- growing conflicts between new development and existing neighborhoods.

Slowly, but surely, our lifestyle is being destroyed right in front of our eyes. The most vexing thing is that there are no "bad guys" in this game. No one wants to destroy this lifestyle, but it is happening anyway. It is only necessary to ask any long time resident of Los Angeles how beautiful the City was in the 1930's or early 1940's, particularly someone who lived in the San Fernando Valley.

THE GOOD NEWS

The City has anticipated these problems and is prepared to deal with them. The Los Angeles City Planning Department and the City Planning Commission are responsible for advising the Mayor and City Council on land use decisions which will best protect and/or enhance the quality of life of our people. In line with this overall responsibility, the Department oversees many different studies, proposals, plans, etc. **Concept Los Angeles** is one such plan. It is a plan for protecting the Los Angeles lifestyle in the face of continued population growth. For us in the City Planning Department, not to address this problem of Los Angeles' deteriorating lifestyle would constitute gross negligence. Of all our responsibilities, none is more serious at this time.

HERE'S WHAT WE HAVE DONE SO FAR

We first started our work on the **Concept Los Angeles Plan** in 1965. The Plan's basic goal, as we saw it, was to:

- Protect and enhance our people's low density living, high work mobility, high recreational mobility, and promote economic and housing choices for all citizens without interfering with continued economic growth and population growth that was taking place.

Four alternative solutions were examined to see how well each would meet this basic goal:

1. Dispersed development.
2. Low density development.
3. Corridor development.
4. Concentrated growth in centers (Now called **Concept Los Angeles**).

The City Planning Department did not develop these plans in a closet; it did everything possible it could to involve potentially affected individuals, groups, corporations, institutions, other public agencies and other public officials. We estimate that some 50,000 individuals contributed in one way or another to the evaluation of these alternatives. By 1972, **Concept Los Angeles** emerged from this participation process as the most preferred solution. The City Council and Mayor, in 1974, formally adopted **Concept Los Angeles** as the most desirable strategy for accommodating future growth without sacrificing the Los Angeles lifestyle.

Concept Los Angeles concentrates new development into about three dozen "centers". Thus, the city policy proposes to keep most of its low density areas and concentrate on developing swift transportation to and between the centers.



WITHOUT A CONCERTED EFFORT TO CHANGE, YOU CAN KISS "THE GOOD" LIFE GOODBYE

If we are to succeed in protecting Los Angeles' lifestyle, we must now begin to vigorously put **Concept Los Angeles** into operation. Time is working against us. The low density living, the high work mobility and high recreation mobility are visibly eroding. The trends that are causing this erosion are very powerful. It will be very difficult to arrest and then reverse these trends. The normal day-to-day, month-to-month and year-to-year ways in which we adjust to the continuing economic and population growth, slowly but surely increase our living densities and strangles our mobility. We in the City Planning Department, therefore, are focusing our efforts on implementing **Concept Los Angeles**.

Concept Los Angeles, at this time, (winter 1982-83) is just that, a concept and statement of policies. In a nutshell, it would channel new growth into relatively high density, multi-purpose centers. Each center would mix industrial, commercial, government, recreational and residential uses. Under **Concept Los Angeles**, greater Los Angeles should become a low density metropolitan area accentuated by some 40 high density centers, with a centers-oriented transit system. That is the Concept Plan.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

This concept of urban centers makes sense, not only to those of us whose job it is to protect the Los Angeles residents' quality of life, but virtually all of the citizens and other interests who have looked into the problems Los Angeles is facing. We know, however, that we do not have all the answers. We are exploring how **Concept Los Angeles** can be put into action and we intend to do this in as open and accessible a manner as we did the 1965-1974 **Concept Los Angeles** work. How Los Angeles accommodates future growth, will, in the long run, affect the quality of life of every man, woman and child in the area. While **Concept Los Angeles** is a strategy for protecting and enhancing the quality of life, it will never come about unless all of the individuals, groups, corporations, institutions, other agencies and other public officials are willing and able to cooperate as they never have before. We will be asking for that help and cooperation because without it, the City's plans will never be implemented and will never do the good they can do. We intend to share the more detailed concepts and information as they are developed with anyone having an interest with the project. In fact, we sincerely hope that those who are interested will be able to assist us in this work, because, in many respects, they have more detailed knowledge and information than we have.

We ask you to contact us if you are concerned about these issues or know others who are. Further explanations and details of our work are available by contacting the centers team at the Los Angeles City Planning Department, Room 504, City Hall, 200 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012, or by calling 485-3864 and asking for Jon Perica, Project Manager, or Murph Miller or Frank Parrello.

COVER PICTURE: SAO PAULO, BRAZIL HAS A HODGE PODGE OF SCATTERED DEVELOPMENT. THIS JARRING DISORIENTED PATTERN STANDS IN STARK CONTRAST TO THE FUTURE THAT THE CITIZENS OF LOS ANGELES WANT FOR THEIR CITY.